Decline in Domestic Cotton Price

1519. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether cotton farmers of Andhra Pradesh are agitated on liberalisation of cotton import, resulting in decline in domestic cotton price; and

(b) the steps taken to help the farmers in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) While concern has been expressed about decline in cotton prices, import of cotton was put under Open general Licence (OGL) from April 1994 with 'nil' import duty. From last budget, import duty of 5% has been imposed. During 1997-98 and 1998-99 cotton years, import of cotton was comparatively more than previous years, whereas during the same cotton years the domestic prices of cotton had gone up and are still higher than international prices.

(b) The Government announces Minimum Support Price (MSP) for kapas every year. Whenever the market price of kapas falls below the MSP level, the Government enters into the market, through the Cotton Corporation of India, to purchase kapas at MSP without any quantitative limit.

Expert Committee on Jute Industry

1520. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Expert Committee constituted by the Ministry of Textiles to look into the question of revival of ailing jute sector has since submitted its report;

(b) if so, its key recommendations;

(c) whether its recommendations have been taken into consideration while preparing the draft of revised textiles policy; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. An Expert Committee was constituted under the Chairmanship of Shri S.R. Sathyam to, inter-alia, review the impact